

being anticipated by Nakatsuka.

The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed. At the outset, it is noted that Nakatsuka addresses the problem associated with "conventional multi-location television conference system[s] implemented by means of an [ISDN, wherein] the number of lines subscribed to connect the conference device CD with the ISDN must not be less than the maximum number of terminals participating in the conference." Moreover, Nakatsuka indicates that "each conference device CD cannot communicate with the conference terminals at different line speeds simultaneously."

Although Nakatsuka discloses an operational management device 108 to control the "starting" and "ending" of the multi-location conferences, it is to facilitate simultaneous connection with conference terminals operating at different line speeds. If anything, this aspect of Nakatsuka's system teaches away from the Applicant's system wherein call schedule data specifying the sequential order of calls to be connected are retrieved in a sequential order for driving the telephone interface structure to provide connections from the central video terminal to the telephonic television terminal units in accordance with the same sequential order for video communication.

The only reference to sequential operation of any sort in Nakatsuka is with respect to a "sequential search through the conference devices 105 in the order predetermined for each of the line speeds [sic] . . . as to whether or not it is possible for

the conference device to convene the specific conference with the determined line speed."

Applicant's system additionally incorporates multiple video format capabilities such that the central station selects a particular video format compatible with the video format operation of a particular telephonic television terminal unit. Whereas the Examiner asserts that Nakatsuka also provides for a plurality of video format circuits at column 11, line 67 through column 12, line 31, it is respectfully submitted that the cited disclosure relates solely to accommodating one of two possible line speeds, i.e. transmission speeds, on the same digital network. Nowhere in Nakatsuka is there any disclosure of multiple video formats. This aspect of the Applicant's system is further emphasized in the claims.

Discussion of the Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 of
Claims 3, 8-9, 13, 16 and 20

In paragraph 4 of the office action, the Examiner rejected claim 13 as unpatentable over Nakatsuka and Sibbitt, et al. The Examiner relies on Sibbitt, et al. for storage of billing data.

The independent claim, claim 1, from which claim 13 depends is distinct for the reasons asserted above. Accordingly, claim 13 is also distinct by virtue of its dependency on claim 1.

In paragraph 5 of the office action, the Examiner rejected claims 3, 8-9, 16 and 20 as being unpatentable over Nakatsuka. The Examiner alleges that it would have been obvious to one

skilled in the art to incorporate an audio response unit within Nakatsuka. The independent claims from which claims 3, 8-9, 16 and 20 depend, that is claims 1, 14 and 20, are distinct for the reasons asserted above. Accordingly, claims 3, 8-9, 16 and 20 are also distinct by virtue of their dependency on claims 1, 14 and 20.

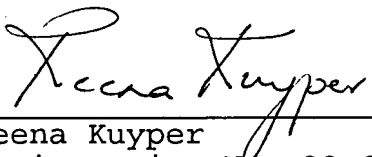
Final Comments

The amendments to the specification correct inadvertent errors.

Favorable consideration and allowance of the claims in this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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